

2019 – 20 Budget Estimates

Report No. 33, 56th Parliament
State Development, Natural Resources
and Agricultural Industry Committee
August 2019

State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee

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Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the budget estimates for the 2019-2020 financial year.

Consideration of the budget estimates allows for the public examination of the responsible Ministers and the chief executive officers of agencies within the committee's portfolio areas. This was undertaken through the questions on notice and public hearing process.

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, and their departmental officers for their co-operation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution to the estimates process, and other members whose participation in the hearing provided additional scrutiny of the estimates.

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance throughout the estimates process.



Chris Whiting MP

Chair

August 2019

1 Introduction

1.1 Role of the committee

The State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee (committee) is a portfolio committee of the Legislative Assembly which commenced on 15 February 2018 under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.¹

The committee's areas of portfolio responsibility are:

- State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning
- Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, and
- Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries.

Section 93(1) of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* provides that a portfolio committee is responsible for examining each bill and item of subordinate legislation in its portfolio areas to consider:

- the policy to be given effect by the legislation
- the application of fundamental legislative principles, and
- for subordinate legislation – its lawfulness.

On 11 June 2019, the Appropriation Bill 2019 and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.²

On 24 July 2019, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and other witnesses. A copy of the transcript of the committee's hearing is available on the committee's webpage.

1.2 Aim of this report

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined.

The committee considered the estimates referred to it by using information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- answers to questions on notice.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all the questions were received.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice; documents tabled during the hearing and answers to questions on notice provided by Ministers after the hearing are available in the Volume of Additional Information tabled with this report and on the inquiry web page.

¹ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, section 88 and Standing Order 194.

² Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

1.3 Participation by other Members

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing. The following Members participated in the hearing:

- Mr Stephen Andrew MP, Member for Mirani
- Mr Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar
- Ms Sandy Bolton MP, Member for Noosa
- Mr Michael Hart MP, Member for Burleigh
- Mr Robert (Robbie) Katter MP, Member for Traeger
- Mr Dale Last MP, Member for Burdekin
- Mr Tony Perrett MP, Member for Gympie
- Mr Andrew Powell MP, Member for Glass House.

2 Recommendation

Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the committee must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

3 Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

3.1 Department of State Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

The Honourable Dr Anthony Lynham MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, is the Minister responsible for the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. The department has three service areas as follows:

- Natural Resources Management Services
- Minerals and Energy Resources Services
- Energy Services

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2019 compares the appropriations for the department for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Appropriations	2018-19 \$'000	2019-20 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>		
departmental services	533,206	470,495
equity adjustment	66,002	91,435
<i>Administered Items</i>	484,667	518,255
Vote	1,083,875	1,080,185

Source: Appropriation Bill 2019, Schedule 2, p 11.

3.1.1 Budget highlights

2019-20 budget highlights for the department include:

- contributing to the Government's response and the protection of the Great Barrier Reef by delivering, regulating and supporting land and water management programs
- implementing improvements to water resource management in response to the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact and the independent audit of Queensland non-urban water measurement and compliance through the Rural Water Management Program
- continuing to deliver dam regulation in Queensland according to the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*
- finalising the partnership with the Australian Government for the delivery and operation of Rookwood Weir
- implementing rural irrigation prices to be charged by Sunwater and Seqwater for the 2020-21 to 2023-24 period, based on advice from the Queensland Competition Authority
- working with industry to develop a series of targeted releases of Unallocated Water Reserves and leasing of Strategic Infrastructure Reserves with the aim of creating economic development and employment outcomes in regional Queensland
- enhancing the Statewide Landcover and Trees Study and vegetation mapping, assessment and monitoring in Queensland through consultation with the Department of Environment and Science
- continuing to promote Native Title Consent determinations across Queensland
- providing real time satellite monitoring of Queensland's natural resources

- continuing to implement the Natural Resources Investment Program to invest in the sustainable management of land, water and vegetation resources.³

The Natural Resources, Mines and Energy portfolio includes the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, energy and water supply government-owned corporations, and statutory bodies reporting to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. The portfolio's capital program for 2019-20 is \$2.660 billion.⁴

The capital purchases for the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy are estimated to be \$109.6 million in 2019-20. Total capital grants for the department are estimated to be \$55 million in 2019-20.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include \$83 million to construct the Rookwood Weir to supplement urban water supplies and enhance agricultural and industrial development in the Fitzroy Basin and Gladstone region.

Program highlights (Capital Grants) include \$55 million to address Townsville's long-term water security needs.⁵

3.2 Public non-financial corporations

Several industries are covered by the Public Non-financial Corporations (PNFC) Sector, including energy and water. Queensland's government-owned corporations (GOCs), declared by regulation to be GOCs under the *Government Owned Corporations Act 1993* (GOC Act), make up a large part of the PNFC sector. Also included in the sector are non-GOC entities, the Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority (trading as Seqwater), local water boards and other public corporations.⁶

3.2.1 CS Energy Limited

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$180.7 million.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$85.8 million for overhauls, enhancements and refurbishments to existing infrastructure at Callide Power Station.
- \$84.6 million for overhauls, enhancements and refurbishments to existing infrastructure at Kogan Creek Power Station.⁷

3.2.2 Stanwell Corporation Limited

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$211.4 million.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$69.3 million for statutory inspections, replacements and refurbishments to existing infrastructure at Tarong Power Station.
- \$33.1 million for statutory inspections, replacement and refurbishment of existing infrastructure at Stanwell Power Station.⁸

³ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements – Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, p 4.

⁴ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 65.

⁵ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 65.

⁶ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Budget Strategy and Outlook 2019-20, p 135.

⁷ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 65.

⁸ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 65.

3.2.3 Energy Queensland

The total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$1.402 billion. The capital program aims to improve electricity supplies across Queensland to meet customer needs, especially to cover periods of peak electricity demand.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$47.4 million to continue work on the multi-stage SunCoast sub-transmission powerline project to increase network capacity and improve reliability.
- \$1.2 million to carry out switchgear replacement and protection equipment installations at Kenmore substation to improve network performance.⁹

3.2.4 Powerlink Queensland

Powerlink Queensland is the high voltage electricity transmission entity for Queensland. Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$217.9 million. This is predominantly focused on replacement of aged equipment and assets to ensure continued reliable supply of electricity.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$6.6 million to replace aged assets on the Collinsville to Proserpine transmission line in North Queensland.
- \$5.7 million to install a new transformer at Calvale Substation and reconfigure the network servicing the Callide Power Station in Central Queensland.
- \$6 million to upgrade Gin Gin Substation near Bundaberg.
- \$5.5 million to replace aged secondary systems at two substations at Callide Power Station in Central Queensland.
- \$7.7 million to replaced aged primary plant at Bouldercombe Substation near Rockhampton.¹⁰

3.2.5 CleanCo Queensland Limited

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$221.5 million. The capital program is focused on overhauls, maintenance and upgrades of generator units and establishing trading and enterprise resource planning systems.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$150 million out of a total \$250 million, held centrally, for CleanCo to build, own and operate new renewable energy generation in Queensland. This funding will be provided to CleanCo as projects are approved.
- \$44 million for scheduled major overhauls of existing infrastructure at Swanbank E Power Station.
- \$4.7 million to implement the energy market trading system.¹¹

3.2.6 SunWater Limited

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 total \$81.9 million. This will focus on enhancing SunWater's dam infrastructure as well as investing in innovative digital technology to drive collaboration and efficiency.

⁹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 66.

¹⁰ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 66.

¹¹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 69.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$18.6 million to construct gravity sidewalls in the spillway chute at Fairbairn Dam to complement earlier stages and enhance the dam to safeguard against future extreme weather events.
- \$7.8 million to continue planning works to enhance the spillway at Paradise Dam to safeguard against future extreme weather events.
- \$4.4 million for routine capital works on irrigation water supply schemes across regional Queensland.
- \$4.6 million for non-routine capital works on industrial pipelines across regional Queensland.
- \$12.7 million to implement new digital enterprise business solutions across SunWater to better service its customers.¹²

3.2.7 Gladstone Area Water Board

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$18.2 million. The capital program is focused on continuing effective and safe operations of Gladstone Area Water Board's property, plant and equipment.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$5.3 million to relocate the Gladstone fish hatchery.
- \$3.4 million to construct a new pump station and connection to Gladstone Regional Council/Kirkwood Reservoir.
- \$1.3 million to secure easements for the Gladstone-Fitzroy Pipeline.
- \$1.2 million to replace sections of the pipeline from Gladstone Water Treatment Plant to South Gladstone Reservoir.
- \$2.3 million to install various water infrastructure in the Gladstone region.¹³

3.2.8 Mount Isa Water Board

Total capital expenditure planned for 2019-20 is \$8 million. The capital program is focused on continuing the cost-efficient, reliable and safe operation of Mount Isa Water Board's water delivery infrastructure.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$1.8 million to complete the Mount Isa Terminal Reservoir storage tanks project, which will provide new potable water storage tanks to replace the aged north tank, eliminate water losses, improve water supply reliability and address water quality assurance requirements.
- \$1.9 million to complete the next renewal stage of the Moondarra to Mount Isa Terminal Reservoir pipeline, particularly the aged and high-risk segment downstream of Lake Moondarra Booster Station.¹⁴

3.2.9 Seqwater

Capital purchases for Seqwater in 2019-20 are \$153.6 million. The capital program is focused on the continuation of a safe, secure and reliable water supply for South East Queensland, as well as providing

¹² Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 67.

¹³ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 67.

¹⁴ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 68.

essential flood mitigation services and managing catchment health. Seqwater has facilities located throughout South-East Queensland.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$5.1 million to continue the refurbishment and upgrade 20 filters at the Mount Crosby East Bank Water Treatment Plant to maintain and improve capacity and reliability.
- \$8.4 million to continue planning works in relation to the Lake Macdonald Dam safety upgrade to comply with dam safety standards for extreme weather events.
- \$10 million to continue planning works for the proposed pipeline to connect Beaudesert to the water grid to secure long-term water supply.¹⁵

3.3 Key issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members in relation to the portfolio areas of responsibility of the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy included:

- bidding directions given to Stanwell on return to service regarding price and energy levels
- the future use of renewables, including wind, solar and hydro-electricity
- the role of CleanCo in the wholesale electricity market
- safety standards for SunWater's dams
- the approval process for the Emu Swamp Dam proposal located near Stanthorpe
- water security issues across Queensland, including the security of Townsville's water supply
- progress of the Cape York water plan
- administration of mulga harvesting under the vegetation management laws
- construction and commencement of the Rookwood Weir
- future water collection and storage initiatives
- health and safety of mine and quarry workers, including coal workers' pneumoconiosis and mobile screening services
- inspections of mines and quarries by the Mines Inspectorate, including resourcing to undertake inspections
- impact of recent mining and quarrying fatalities
- domestic-only gas tenement program
- sustainable management of Queensland mineral resources.

¹⁵ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, pp 68-69.

4 Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

4.1 Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

The Honourable Cameron Dick MP, Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, is the Minister responsible for the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. The department has four service areas as follows:

- Driving enterprise development, economic growth and job creation
- Assessing, approving, developing and delivering projects to generate jobs and economic growth
- Economic and infrastructure strategy, policy and planning
- Better planning for Queensland.

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2019 compares the appropriations for the department for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Appropriations	2018-19 \$'000	2019-20 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>		
departmental services	475,430	475,791
equity adjustment	139,917	74,269
<i>Administered Items</i>	604,240	691,720
Vote	1,219,587	1,241,780

Source: Appropriation Bill 2019, Schedule 2, p 11.

4.1.1 Budget highlights

2019-20 budget highlights for the department include:

- commencing operations of the manufacturing hubs in Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton to support the growth of regional manufacturing and drive the generation of new jobs and increased private sector investment in regional Queensland
- continuing to implement 10-year roadmaps and action plans for priority and emerging sectors with global growth potential as part of the Advance Queensland program. Advanced manufacturing; aerospace; biofutures; biomedical; defence industries; and mining equipment, technology and services are sectors identified to build upon Queensland's competitive strengths
- developing a Queensland Space Strategy to deliver on the recommendations from the Queensland Parliamentary inquiry into the space industry to support the growth of this emerging sector, and formalise the key relationship with the Australian Space Agency through a memorandum of understanding
- continuing to implement the \$100 million Resource Recovery Industry Development fund through grants to local councils and industry for projects that will divert waste from landfill and create new jobs
- establishing a \$15 million hydrogen industry development fund to provide financial assistance to private sector investors, such as demonstration projects for remote power and low carbon community development, hydrogen vehicle deployment, installation of renewable hydrogen into existing or new businesses and industry, and the production of renewable hydrogen for export

- progressing the Biofutures Acceleration Program as part of the Queensland Biofutures 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan, providing assistance to selected proponents capable of developing commercial-scale biorefinery projects in Queensland
- administering development agreements for the construction of the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal and the implementation of the Aurukun Bauxite project
- supporting the development of a robust project pipeline that enables local and State Government job creating projects to be matured through the continuing \$30 million Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program
- improving coordination of infrastructure planning across the Queensland Government to provide better opportunities for early industry engagement
- as part of the commitment to *Shaping SEQ's Growth Monitoring Program*, releasing the 2019 Land Supply and Development Monitoring Report, releasing the 2019 Measures that Matter and continued engagement and input from the Housing Supply Expert Panel
- making continual improvements to the planning framework to increase transparency and community confidence including amendments to the infrastructure charging frameworks.¹⁶

In 2019-20, the State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning portfolio, including Economic Development Queensland, South Bank Corporation and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, has capital purchases of \$109.1 million and capital grants of \$348.2 million.

The Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning has capital purchases of \$13.7 million and capital grants of \$111.9 million in 2019-20 to support economic development in Queensland.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$12.3 million for State Development Area acquisitions.

Program highlights (Capital Grants) include:

- \$97.4 million through the Building our Regions program to fund critical infrastructure in regional areas.¹⁷

4.2 Statutory bodies and commercialised business units

The Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning is also responsible for the following statutory bodies:

- Building Queensland
- Queensland Reconstruction Authority
- South Bank Corporation.

The Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning is responsible for Economic Development Queensland, a commercialised business unit.

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4.2.1 Building Queensland

Building Queensland is a statutory body providing independent, expert advice on major infrastructure.

¹⁶ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, pp 4-5.

¹⁷ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement – Budget Paper No. 3, p 105.

Building Queensland leads the development of detailed business cases for projects with an estimated capital cost of delivery of \$100 million or more and assists with those between \$50 and \$100 million. This threshold is higher for road transport projects with Building Queensland leading detailed business cases for projects over \$500 million that are not toll roads. Working across all asset classes, Building Queensland also provides advice in the early stages of proposal development.¹⁸

The Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning administers funds for Building Queensland.¹⁹

4.2.2 Queensland Reconstruction Authority

Queensland Reconstruction Authority has progressed initiatives from 2018-19 which are ongoing in 2019-20. These include:

- assisting with activation, damage assessment and coordinating Queensland's ongoing recovery efforts from natural disaster events, along with managing the disaster reconstruction programs worth approximately \$2.399 billion, comprising of works from 23 events from 2017 to 2019 that are to be delivered through to 30 June 2021
- acquittal of a \$314 million claim to the Australian Government under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, involving more than 340 submissions from 75 local governments and state agencies. On accepting the claim, the Australian Government will pay its contribution to the State of more than \$130 million
- co-delivery of the Brisbane River Strategic Floodplain Management Plan for implementation with agencies
- delivery of three regional resilience strategies across 17 local government areas as pilot projects of the newly implemented Resilient Queensland, which delivers on the Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience.²⁰

In 2019-20, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority has capital spend of \$1.3 million and capital grants of \$236.2 million to support the Queensland Government's program of infrastructure renewal and recovery within disaster-affected communities and help build disaster resilience across the State.

Program highlights (Capital Grants) include:

- \$210.5 million for Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements will be paid to local government authorities for reconstruction, betterment and other projects relating to natural disaster events between 2017 and 2019. A total of up to 75% is funded by the Australian Government with the remainder funded by the Queensland Government.
- \$6.2 million for the Natural Disaster Resilience Program 2017-18 to support Queensland communities' resilience to natural disasters, funded jointly by the Australian Government and the Queensland Government.
- \$5.4 million for the Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund, a State-funded program delivering \$38 million over four years (\$36 million in capital grants and \$2 million in operating funds for the Strategic Floodplain Management Plan) to support delivery of disaster mitigation projects and initiatives that build resilience to natural disasters.

¹⁸ Queensland State Budget 2019-20 - Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, pp 30 - 31.

¹⁹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20 - Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, p 15.

²⁰ Queensland State Budget 2019-20 - Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, p 31.

- \$13.3 million for extraordinary recovery and reconstruction projects following Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie, including
 - \$2 million for the Proserpine Entertainment Centre
 - \$1.8 million for the Whitsunday Regional Council administration building
 - \$700,000 for the Toowoomba SES Operations Centre
 - \$6.3 million for the Mackay Beaches and Bluewater Trail and Queens Park Revitalisation
 - \$860,000 for the Airlie Beach Foreshore Revitalisation
 - \$1.7 million for other resilience projects.²¹

4.2.3 South Bank Corporation

The objects of the South Bank Corporation, as outlined in the *South Bank Corporation Act 1989*, are to:

- promote, facilitate, carry out and control the development, disposal and management of land and other property within the Corporation area
- achieve an appropriate balance between the Corporation's commercial and non-commercial functions
- ensure the Corporation area complements, rather than duplicates, other public use sites in the inner-city Brisbane area
- provide for a diverse range of recreational, cultural and educational pursuits for local, regional and international visitors
- accommodate public events and entertainment that benefit the general community
- achieve excellence and innovation in the management of open space and park areas.

The South Bank Parklands are owned by the Corporation and managed on its behalf by Brisbane City Council and its wholly owned subsidiary, City Parklands Services Pty Ltd.²²

2019-20 new initiatives include:

- progressing the preparation of a new master plan for the South Bank Corporation area which will create a blueprint for future revitalisation, inform potential opportunities for future development and redevelopment and provide a strategic framework for the future maintenance and replacement of aging infrastructure assets over the next 30 years
- redevelopment of the riverside open space on the site previously occupied by the disused Riverside Restaurants building
- continuing the Parklands, Little Stanley Street and Grey Street retail activation through investment in capital works, retail innovation and marketing
- continuing to manage and enhance, with Brisbane City Council, the distinct elements of the parklands precinct
- continuing to work with Brisbane City Council regarding numerous projects that impact South Bank's land and operations (including Brisbane Metro, ferry terminals and bikeways)

²¹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 106.

²² Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, p 38.

- continuing to work with the State Government to assist in facilitating the delivery of the Neville Bonner Bridge as part of the Queen's Wharf Brisbane development and the new performing arts venue on the Playhouse Green at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.²³

In 2019-20, South Bank Corporation has budgeted capital works expenditure totalling \$29.7 million to enhance the South Bank Parklands, the Corporation's commercial assets and the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Included in this amount is \$10.5 million as part of the Riverside Open Space, which will create a new green heart for South Bank where the Riverside Restaurants previously stood.²⁴

4.2.4 Economic Development Queensland

Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) is the Queensland Government's specialist land use planning and property development agency. Working with State agencies, local governments, the development industry and communities, EDQ identifies, plans, facilitates and delivers Priority Development Areas and development projects.

Projects include large complex urban sites that facilitate renewal, regional projects that provide community and economic benefit, industrial activities that generate ongoing employment opportunities and infrastructure projects that drive further development. EDQ's key objectives include:

- renewing and repurposing surplus and underutilised State property to create jobs, drive economic growth and deliver community outcomes
- fast tracking planning, development and delivery of property and infrastructure projects
- engaging with communities, councils and industry on projects to ensure they meet local needs and aspirations
- demonstrating innovation in planning, building and infrastructure projects.²⁵

In 2019-20, EDQ has capital purchases of \$64.3 million. Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

- \$17.3 million for the urban renewal development at Northshore Hamilton
- \$16.3 million to develop the Oxley Priority Development Area
- \$15 million to develop Carseldine Urban Village and construct a pedestrian bridge
- \$5 million for the proposed Cairns Regional Industrial Estate development
- \$2.4 million for the industrial expansion at the Gladstone State Development Area
- \$2.4 million for the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct.²⁶

4.3 Key issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members in relation to the portfolio areas of responsibility of the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning included:

- development of energy industries in Queensland, including hydrogen and nuclear power

²³ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, p 38.

²⁴ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, pp 105-106.

²⁵ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, p 44.

²⁶ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 105.

- implementation of Cross River Rail project, including location of stations and naming of Priority Development Areas
- Bundaberg State Development Area scheme
- capital investment acquisitions in various State Development Areas in Queensland
- establishment of a robotics manufacturing hub
- approval and commencement of Six Mile Creek Dam Safety Upgrade project
- administration of the *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017*
- administration of the Craft Brewing Strategy
- creation of biorefinery in regional sugar mills
- attraction of Qantas flight training centre to Queensland
- business case assessment for Cairns Convention Centre, Nullinga Dam, Mareeba-Dimbulah water supply scheme and Brisbane Live entertainment area
- delivery and implementation of regional plans across Queensland
- update of the State Infrastructure Plan Part B
- implementation of infrastructure projects under the Building Our Regions program
- administration of Priority Development Areas including Oxley and Mackay
- administration of South Bank Corporation
- approval process of Carmichael Mine rail line.

5 Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries

5.1 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Honourable Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, is the Minister responsible for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). The department has three service areas as follows:

- Agriculture
- Biosecurity Queensland
- Fisheries and Forestry.²⁷

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2019 compares the appropriations for the department for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Appropriations	2018-19 \$'000	2019-20 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>		
departmental services	313,808	329,014
equity adjustment	(2,503)	(12,029)
<i>Administered Items</i>	42,474	238,196
Vote	353,779	555,181

Source: Appropriation Bill 2019, Schedule 2, p 7.

5.1.1 Budget highlights – Agriculture

2019-20 Agriculture will:

- develop a strategy for agri-business and food industry development to encourage employment growth and private sector investment
- commence negotiations with industry on actions required to create a 10-year roadmap to achieve zero net emissions in the agriculture sector by 2050. To support this, DAF will drive the adoption of a range of technologies to promote cleaner production systems for intensive agriculture that reduce carbon emissions and nutrient sediment discharges
- continue implementation of the Queensland Agriculture and Food Research Development and Extension 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan
- continue to build strong partnerships to grow the effectiveness of the Drought and Climate Adaptation Program
- support the rebuilding of rural communities and industries by providing assistance to north and western Queensland recovery operations and continuing the existing Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (up to \$50 million over the next four years, held centrally) as part of the multi-agency Drought Assistance Package and Queensland Drought Reform

²⁷ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 1.

- reshape vocational education and training in the State's central west by implementing a modern, cost-effective training module.²⁸

Budget highlights – Biosecurity

In 2019-20, Biosecurity Queensland will work closely with national and local governments, industry bodies, producers and the community to maintain a strong biosecurity system. Biosecurity Queensland's main areas of focus are:

- animal pests and diseases
- plant pests and diseases
- invasive plants and animals, such as weeds and pest animals
- biosecurity diagnostics and other laboratory services
- animal welfare and ethics, including exhibited animals
- agricultural and veterinary chemical use and contaminant risk
- biosecurity incident responses, such as exotic tramp ants and Panama disease tropical race 4 in bananas
- eradication of the red imported fire ant infestation in South_East Queensland.²⁹

Budget highlights - Fisheries and Forestry

In 2019-20 DAF, will ensure sustainable and productive fisheries and the responsible allocation and use of State-owned forests and related resources.

Fisheries and Forestry will do this by:

- implementing the Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027
- providing education and enforcing fishing regulations to ensure sustainability of fisheries resources for commercial, recreational and traditional fishers
- conducting technical assessments and providing advice on development applications that impact on fisheries related Matters of State Environmental Significance, including aquaculture, marine plants and fish passage
- responsibly managing the allocation and use of State-owned forests and related resources
- supporting the growth and development of the Queensland forest and timber industry
- overseeing the Plantation Licence issued to HQPlantations Pty Ltd and related agreements.³⁰

5.1.2 Capital purchases and grants

In 2019-20, capital purchases and grants for DAF are \$19.7 million. The department's capital program is focused on developing and upgrading research facilities to deliver outcomes for agriculture, biosecurity, fisheries and forestry.

Program highlights (Property, Plant and Equipment) include:

²⁸ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 5.

²⁹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 4.

³⁰ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 10.

- \$6.4 million to continue upgrades of the department's research and operational facilities through the research facilities development, scientific equipment and minor works programs
- \$2 million for new and replacement heavy plant and equipment including trucks, tractors, irrigators, all-terrain vehicles and other machinery
- \$1.7 million to complete Stage 1 of the Toowoomba facilities upgrade project, which will enhance service delivery and improve operational efficiency
- \$1.1 million to continue replacement of vessels and marine equipment for fisheries research and regulatory functions
- \$700,000 to commence refurbishing the Tick Fever Centre at Wacol to meet required Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority standards.³¹

Program highlights (Capital Grants) include:

- \$914,000 for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Queensland as a contribution towards a new adoption facility at Townsville.³²

5.2 Statutory Bodies

The Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries is also responsible for:

- Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges
- Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority.

5.2.1 Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges

Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges (QATC) has been a specialist provider of vocational education and training (VET) to the agricultural sector. Training is provided on campus at Longreach and Emerald and hubs across Queensland that integrate with industry requirements.

Considering the recommendations made by an external review, the Queensland Government made the decision that QATC will cease operations at the end of 2019 and transition to more modern and cost-effective training.³³

The QATC priorities for the remainder of 2019 are to:

- ensure current students can complete their qualification or studies at the QATC either through the 'teach-out' period in 2019 or through a supported transition to other training providers
- honour existing commitments to employee and business partners to deliver specific programs where arrangements were in place prior to 5 December 2018
- deliver the high school boarding programs Rural Reach (Longreach) and Access Education (Emerald)
- maximise employment opportunities for displaced staff, in consultation with staff and union representatives, which may include retraining, deployment, or redeployment
- provide local support to students and staff
- work with all local communities to determine the best future use of existing college facilities.³⁴

³¹ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 24.

³² Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, p 24.

³³ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 27.

³⁴ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 27.

5.2.2 Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) is a specialised administrator of government financial assistance programs including loans, grants, rebates and subsidies, and a range of farm debt services. QRIDA's core responsibility is to administer the Queensland Government's Primary Industry Productivity Enhancement Scheme (PIPES) and when required, support the delivery of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) assistance for primary producers, small businesses and non-profit organisations (jointly funded by the Queensland and Australian Governments).

In 2019-20, QRIDA will focus on:

- providing a broad, flexible and cost-effective range of administrative services to assist government agencies deliver financial and regulatory programs to the highest standards. Key financial and regulatory programs include:
 - First Start and Sustainability loans under the Queensland Government's PIPES concessional loans and grants under DRFA
 - loan and grant packages under the Interest Free Loans for Solar and Storage Scheme as a component of the Affordable Energy Package
 - Reef Catchment Rebates and managing the panel of industry specialists
 - North Queensland Restocking, Replanting and On-farm Infrastructure Grant Scheme, funded by the Australian Government
- management of the compulsory Farm Business Debt Mediation program to provide a process for the efficient and equitable resolution of farm debt disputes
- expansion of policy and research functions with a focus on farm finance matters
- administration of rural debt surveys in Queensland in accordance with prescribed legislation and national data collection administration of the Farm Debt Restructure Office within the QRIDA and its supporting program, the Farm Business Analysis Assistance.³⁵

5.3 Key issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members in relation to the portfolio areas of responsibility of the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries included:

- launch of the #eatqld campaign
- administration of Biosecurity Queensland service area objectives of focusing on invasive plants and weeds, including the threat of prickly acacia
- funding agreement between Commonwealth and Queensland Governments in relation to the eradication of fire ants
- Biosecurity Queensland management of cattle tick
- continuing work with agri-businesses to increase their capacity to respond to production risks
- the Coaldrake Review into the Longreach Pastoral College and the Emerald Agricultural College
- administration of Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges
- administration of the Farm Business Debt Mediation Program
- administration of Category C assistance grants in relation to natural disasters

³⁵ Queensland State Budget 2019-20, Service Delivery Statements - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, p 33.

- administration of the Shark Control Program
- sustainability of species such as mud crabs
- the role of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy in driving changes to fisheries management
- initiatives to develop the aquaculture industry in Queensland into the future
- administration of the vessel monitoring system.

6 Statement of Reservation

Introduction

The Palaszczuk Labor Government's 2019/20 budget was a bad budget for Queensland.

It was a budget of higher taxes, more debt, less jobs and less infrastructure.

The budget showed that Labor is cutting infrastructure spending at a time when we now have the worst unemployment on mainland Australia.

It was a budget that introduced new taxes ripping another \$1.25 billion from the state's economy, plunged Queensland into more than \$90 billion in debt and revealed almost 26,000 less jobs than forecast.

This \$1.25 billion in new taxes is on top of the taxes Labor has already inflicted on Queensland since being re-elected.

A total of \$3.5 billion in taxes so far and Annastacia Palaszczuk hasn't ruled out more taxes and tax hikes into the future.

The 2019 estimates hearings were dominated by the Palaszczuk Labor Government's ongoing integrity crisis. In the 30th year since the Fitzgerald Inquiry report was published, these latest scandals provide significant questions about the government's openness, transparency, accountability and integrity that have engulfed the leadership of this government.

Energy

The significance of energy as an essential element for our community cannot be overstated. The LNP Members support a policy agenda that will deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable energy to Queenslanders. Unfortunately, only 30 minutes was available to non-government members to ask questions at the Estimates Hearing. Based on what was provided at the Hearing, we are far from convinced that the approach adopted by the Labor Government will provide these outcomes.

The challenges of managing potential conflicts of interests within the Board of Energy Queensland was just one item that continued the Palaszczuk Labor Government's integrity issues. The creation of Queensland's third publicly owned electricity generator CleanCo is a major concern. It involves taking away assets including Wivenhoe pumped storage system and the Swanbank E gas-fired power station from the existing power generators, thereby putting them at greater operational and financial risk.

It was disappointing to learn that although market proposals for the Renewables 400 Reverse Auction had been received almost two years ago, it is only now that the Government has decided to act on the proposals. This sends a poor message to industry operators, many of whom would have already moved on to other opportunities.

While some of the record dividends extracted from the Government-owned generating businesses were used to support measures under the Affordable Energy Plan, it was also directed to the government coffers - raising concerns that the Government is using high electricity charges as a secret tax. It was further noted that the Government has extended the obsolete tariffs phase-out date of 1 July 2020 by

12 months. This delay simply pushes the issue past the 2020 election in order to avoid scrutiny during the election, as Labor does not have a plan to provide our farmers with electricity at a price that makes it affordable for them to water their crops.

The LNP members were also concerned about the process surrounding the introduction of new legislation that would impact the costs of solar farms. These new laws had been challenged by the LNP and had been rejected by the Courts. Rather than address the potential to impact on the renewable industry, it was disappointing that the Minister merely deflected questions around this issue to the Minister for Industrial Relations.

Natural Resources and Mines

The LNP members of the committee wish to raise serious concerns regarding the budget for the department for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. These centre around the adequacy of funding for key departmental functions as well as issues around stalling and delaying of key projects.

Of major concern is the Minister's inability to answer questions in relation to which water providers in the state were not meeting their targets and were, in fact, non-compliant.

Clearly, as per the budget papers, there were at least 10 providers who were non-compliant, however the Minister refused to name these providers both at the Estimates Hearing and in his subsequent response to the question which was taken on notice. Queenslanders deserve to know if their local area is failing to meet water standards – this cover up by the Labor government is nothing short of a disgrace.

During a Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) review into irrigation pricing, it was frustrating to have SunWater attempt to justify cost blowouts. With many stakeholders predicting the QCA review will result in 'cost-reflective' pricing, it would appear that the final costs of these blowouts will be borne by irrigator customers. The LNP agrees with peak industry groups, such as the Queensland Farmers' Federation, in standing against these costs being passed on while budgets are being over-spent with little result.

The Minister's refusal to rule out passing on 'cost-reflective' prices to irrigators during the hearing, will cause great angst and uncertainty to farmers throughout the state.

Our concerns regarding Queensland's water supplies also include the increasing cost of dam safety and the impact it is having on the maintenance of existing dams and the implications for new water infrastructure projects.

The scope of remaining works required at Burdekin Falls, Fairbairn and Paradise dams, the three newest in the state, is concerning. As is the potential for the lowering of Paradise dam's spillway by 17 metres because of the costs involved in repairing the existing wall. We also note that the Minister failed to rule out reducing the capacity of this important dam.

Despite repeated requests, the current Labor Government will not reveal the reason for its anti-dam agenda, its go-slow on dam projects and its failure to fund and approve critical dam infrastructure in the State. Rather than provide answers, we

were only provided with excuses for the lack of funding for promising projects like Emu Swamp Dam, Nullinga, raising Burdekin Falls Dam to its originally intended capacity and finally starting Rookwood Dam.

It is interesting to note the Minister's change of heart regarding the Emu Swamp Dam since the estimates hearing. The government has now committed to this vital project despite no mention of it in the budget papers or during the estimates hearing.

With respect to the Rookwood Dam project, the government finally provided a response regarding the expected completion of the dam. In a pre-estimates question on notice Minister Lynham stated that the project was scheduled for a 2021-22 completion. However, when questioned on a finishing date, SunWater CEO Nicole Hollows stated it would be 2024, a full two years after the Minister indicated.

This fact alone proves that the current Labor Government is ideologically opposed to building and maintaining our state's critical water infrastructure.

The LNP has serious concerns about the management of safety in Queensland's mines by the Labor Government, especially considering the six deaths in Queensland mines and quarries in the last 12 months.

The LNP members of the Committee were denied an answer as to why the Palaszczuk Labor Government has slashed the number of mine inspections in Queensland from 1781 in 2015-16 to just 1241 in 2018-2019.

Given the Minister's previous media statements around the justification for lowering these inspections in favour of 'deep-dive audits', it was telling to hear Executive Director of Resource Safety and Health, Mr Stone, state that in relation to quarries: 'We did fewer of those deeper dive audits and inspections that take multiple days and instead prioritised many more shorter inspections...' – completely contradicting the Minister's claim that audits were a superior form of compliance check.

The reduction in inspections raises concerns that the department does not have the appropriate resources to conduct both the audits and inspections as required to meet demand arising from the multiple fatalities. Both the Director-General and Minister failed to properly clarify whether or not the resourcing was sufficient.

Unsurprisingly, in the hearing, the LNP was able to confirm that once again the Gas Action plan promised in 2015 was still missing in action. Minister Lynham was yet again unable to commit to delivering the plan despite millions of taxpayers' dollars being spent and the report being almost four years late.

The LNP members of the Committee make no apology for seeking the answers that Queenslanders deserve when it comes to these important projects, industries and infrastructure. The Minister's refusal to provide these answers is a stunning indictment on the current government.

State Development, Infrastructure, Manufacturing and Planning

Regrettably, from the outset of the hearing the Minister attempted to use dubious procedural tactics to shut down questions relating to the integrity crisis engulfing the Deputy Premier. After just two questions to the Acting Director General, the Minister

intervened to block any further questions being asked relating to the significant work the department had been involved in with Cross River Rail preparation works.

The Palaszczuk Labor Government's propensity for media announcements with no follow-up was further revealed during questions relating to the Bundaberg and Cairns South State Development Areas (SDA). It was confirmed that no projects had been commenced within the Bundaberg SDA even though a proposed solar farm was floated in the proceeding year's hearing and the site was declared in February 2017. Unfortunately, the same situation was confirmed for the Cairns South SDA when it was revealed that the development scheme hadn't even been completed two years after the project was first announced.

After questioning from the Committee, it was revealed that the department which has responsibility for overseeing the development of Queensland's craft brewing industry didn't raise any issues with the introduction of the Palaszczuk Labor Government's new beer tax. Instead of backing Queensland craft brewers, the estimates hearing has revealed the Manufacturing Minister was aware and did not disclose the recently introduced ten-fold increase in the government's beer tax.

The CEO of Building Queensland confirmed that the government had been withholding several key businesses cases which had been completed from publication. Touted infrastructure projects such as the Cairns Convention Centre, Brisbane Live and Nullinga Dam were all confirmed by the CEO of Building Queensland to have been completed and handed to the Palaszczuk Labor Government yet no instruction had been provided for them to be published publicly.

The Palaszczuk Labor Government's betrayal of regional communities was further revealed when the Acting Director General confirmed a regional plan outside of South East Queensland hadn't been completed or reviewed since the Palaszczuk Labor Government was elected in 2015. Labor's anti-regions and anti-jobs agenda continues to hold regional communities back. Even though it has been three years since Labor promised to deliver a North Queensland regional plan for Townsville, the government still has no definitive date for when it will be finalised. Adding insult to injury for Townsville residents, it was revealed that even though the Member for Mundingburra blamed the local planning scheme for the proposed five-storey youth foyer development she had not raised any issues with the Acting Director General of the department.

Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Forestry

It is very clear that the budget handed down for agriculture, fisheries and forestry in Queensland is lacking in almost all capacities. The estimates process confirmed what industry has been saying about the lack of leadership from the Minister for Agriculture, Mark Furner.

The majority of the hearing was filibustered by Minister Furner and his departmental staff opting to provide long and irrelevant monologues rather than factual and relevant answers to questions posed by opposition members.

Minister Furner provided a strange recollection of events around why he has failed to date to stump up the promised \$5 million he announced in March to fight prickly acacia. Instead of admitting that he either never had the money or had it reallocated

after a federal coalition victory, Minister Furner instead claimed that the promised co-funded \$5 million from the federal government was a bad deal and was ‘an offer from Canberra that is not good for everyone’.

Equally frustrating was the non-answers received to questions in relation to the success and progress of the 10-year fire ant eradication plan. The fact that targets for eradication continue to be missed and funding out the 10-year plan is being moved forward to try and urgently bring the project back from the brink were not properly admitted to.

It was very concerning to uncover that Minister Furner was not aware of and would not refer to the integrity commissioner’s concerns aired around Professor Peter Coaldrake’s donation of \$1760 to the Labor Party in June 2018 – just two weeks before the release of his report recommending the closure of the Emerald and Longreach colleges.

Add to this the lack of certainty provided to those communities currently dealing with the forced closures of the Ag Colleges by Labor and it paints a dire situation.

Oddly Minister Furner also failed to even acknowledge the fact the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance, an advisory committee he funds, had provided him with an Ag education and jobs plan. Instead of answering questioning on the progress of implementing the report – he decided to describe what the Rural Jobs and Skills alliance was.

The LNP have grave concerns about the management of Queensland’s biosecurity under this Labor Government. Revelations that the key industry advisory group, the Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee (BQMAC), had not met since January 2018 – a period of more than 19 months. Worse still the Minister admitted the reason for this committee not meeting whilst the Biosecurity Act and regulations undergo a review is due to their inability to meet gender quotas.

Perhaps the most extreme aberration of Labor’s agenda against the state’s primary producers comes in Minister’s Furner’s attack on Queensland’s commercial fishing sector.

The fact that Minister Furner was contradicted by his own department on his public comments in the media around the justification for Mud Crab quota restrictions demonstrated this.

Minister Furner described the Mud Crab populations as being in ‘dire straits’ however this was confirmed false. The question around what justification, given that it was not scientific, was being used for these and other quota reforms was asked but was unable to be answered by Minister Furner or his department.

The disregard for commercial fishers continues with the Minister refusing to apologise for the botched rollout of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) through the government certified provider of the YB3i Option Audio.

Despite a complaint by commercial fishers to the Queensland Ombudsman that confirmed there was no Regulatory Impact Statement completed or modelling completed on this impact of the VMS systems, the Minister was unflinching that there were no major issues with the rollout.

While these issues were able to be aired in estimates, even though with little new information being provided, the LNP remained frustrated that more time could not be spent examining the budget and the government's activities. There were many more questions left wanting given Labor and the Minister's tactic of filibustering the estimates hearing into agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

The non-government members were once again disappointed in the lack of openness and transparency during the estimates process with the government more concerned with damage control due to the integrity crises that surrounds this government that in giving fulsome answers to Committee questions.



Pat Weir MP
Member for Condamine
Deputy Chair of SDNRAIDC



David Batt MP
Member for Bundaberg
Shadow Assistant Minister for State Development



Brent Mickelberg MP
Member for Buderim
Shadow Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development